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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Letter No. 2304

March 19, 1987

EXPORT SALES
INCREASE

U.S. export sales of wheat, grain sorghum, rice and cotton exceed last season. In wheat, the accumulated exports for 1985/86 were 18 million 123 thousand metric tons...for 1986/87, 19 million 508 thousand metric tons. For corn, the accumulated exports decreased from 23 million 86 thousand metric tons in 1985/86, down to 16 million, 666 thousand metric tons for 1986/87.

U.S. FOOD
SPENDING TO
INCREASE

The total U.S. food spending is projected to increase 49 pct. by the year 2000, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The growth in per capital income will outweigh spending changes caused by demographic shifts. Vegetables, fruit and beef will enjoy the biggest gains in spending for consumption at home.

OUTLOOK FOR
FARM PROGRAMS

Government spending on farm programs in fiscal 1987 is projected to fall half a billion dollars from the \$25 billion 800 million spent in 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. During 1988 and 1989, the cost escalation of the first half of the 1980's will reverse. If the current policy remains in force, the annual farm program spending by 1992 will be down from last year's record by more than \$8 billion. The President's budget proposals for 1988-1992 would cut spending an additional \$24 billion.

U.S. EXPORT
VOLUME MAY RISE

The export volume of U.S. agricultural products is expected to rise in fiscal 1987 for the first time in 7 years. This is particularly due to the expected 1987 growth in foreign economy of close to 2.6 pct., the same as in 1986, but above the 2.4 pct. average of 1980 to 1986.

EROSION

Over 5 billion tons of U.S. soil erode each year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Erosion on cropland exceeds 3 billion tons a year. Large as those numbers seem, erosion does not pose a serious threat to the United States' ability to produce food and fiber. However, erosion is serious in some locales. The on-site costs of erosion exceed \$1 billion per year, but the off-site costs, such as pollution of rivers, are several times greater. The USDA accepted 10 million 600 thousand additional acres of highly erodible cropland into the Conservation Reserve Program during February, bringing the total to 19 million.

LOOKING GOOD
FOR THANKSGIVING

There are a lot of turkeys in the future of the U.S. Turkey eggs in incubators on March 1, 1987, totaled 31 million, 18 pct. above the 26 million 300 thousand a year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And the 21 million poults placed during Feb. 1987 were 13 pct. above the placements during the same month a year ago.

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COWS WORKING
HARDER

Milk production in 21 selected states totaled 9 billion 280 million pounds, 3 pct. less than production in these same states in February 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The production per cow in the 21 selected states averaged 1052 pounds for February, 24 pounds more than February a year ago. The surveyed 21 states produced 84.9 pct. of the U.S. production. If producers in the remaining 29 states not surveyed followed the same production pattern, then the U.S. production would be 10 billion 900 million pounds for February.

DAIRY
TERMINATION
UPDATE

An estimated 13,000 head of dairy cattle were slaughtered in federally-inspected plants during the week ending February 27 as a result of the Dairy Termination Program, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The cumulative total of cattle slaughtered under the program from April through February 27 is an estimated 1 million, 11 thousand head. Dairy cattle reported for export under the program for the period April 1 through March 13 totaled an estimated 54,590 head.

CATTLE ON
FEED AND
PLACEMENTS

Cattle and calves on feed on March 1 for slaughter market in the seven states preparing monthly estimates totaled 7 million 130 thousand head, down 3 pct. from a year ago and 10 pct. below March 1, 1985, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The seven reporting states are Ariz., Calif., Colo., Iowa, Kansas, Nebr., and Texas. The placements of cattle and calves on feed during February totaled 1 million 410 thousand, up 15 pct. above last year and 4 pct. above February two years ago.

DON'T BUY
BANG'S

The animal health officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture warn cattle producers to use caution when buying cattle so they don't jeopardize recent progress in eradicating brucellosis, or Bang's disease. Bert Hawkins, admin. of USDA's APHIS, advises cattle buyers to follow these three steps: First, buy from certified herds or from clean areas. Second, make sure the heifers you buy are tested for Bangs. Third, make sure all new cattle are isolated for 45 to 120 days and retested for brucellosis before they are mixed in with the rest of the herd.

GENERIC
CERTIFICATES

The Commodity Credit Corporation issued \$3 billion 850 million worth of generic certificates from April through Dec. 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. About \$1 billion 800 million of these had not been exchanged by Jan. 1, 1987. An additional \$4 billion 300 million in certificates has been authorized for issuance during Jan.-Aug. 1987. These certificates will provide ample free supplies of corn and wheat for the remainder of the crop year. Freeing of stocks through certificates is making U.S. grain more competitive on world markets. Last summer certificates were exchanged for 215 million bushels of corn. Farm-level corn prices averaged about \$2 a bushel, and the lower prices probably led to a use increase of 40 to 50 million bushels.



FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

CURRENT AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK...The Commodity Credit Corporation issued \$3.85 billion worth of generic certificates from April through December 1986. USDA economist Herb Moses discusses current outlook for U.S. agriculture. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (151)

AGRICULTURAL DEBT - I...A recent study shows that the largest number of farmers experiencing financial stress are located in the South, but the largest potential financial losses are in the Midwest. USDA economist Greg Hanson talks about factors contributing to this situation. Vic Powell interviews. (152)

AGRICULTURAL DEBT - II...USDA economist Greg Hanson discusses the characterization of the financially stressed operator and prospects for an upturn in the 1980's. Vic Powell interviews. (153)

SOYBEAN YIELD RESEARCH...Steve Farrand, a microbiologist with the University of Illinois, describes how scientists are searching for ways to help good soil microorganisms thrive in the soil to help soybean producers increase yield. Gary Beaumont interviews. (154)

SUGARS AND SWEETENERS UPDATE...This year's one million tons sugar import quota is sharply reduced from 1986 levels, moving U.S. prices higher, nearly 23 cents a pound compared to the world price of six cents. USDA economist David Harvey comments on the current outlook for sugar. Vic Powell interviews. (155)

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1555...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Farmers selling directly to consumers may want to consider growing different types of vegetables. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA George Holmes talks to several experts from the University of Massachusetts on direct marketing.


AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1542...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Conservation reserve sign-up results; Cotton certificate extension; Diversification; Saving wetlands.

CONSUMER TIME #1037...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Termites or not?; Wildfire strikes home; Dethatching your lawn; Home values and landscaping; Lysteria--a dangerous bacteria.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Tues, Mar. 31, Weekly weather and crop report; Wed, Apr. 1, Tobacco outlook; Thurs, Apr. 2, Oil crops outlook; Tues, Apr. 1, Weekly weather and crop outlook; Wed, Apr. 8, Agricultural resources outlook; Thurs, Apr. 9, Crop production report; Soviet grain situation and outlook; World ag. supply and demand; Horticultural products review. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

It's been a nice week for visitors. A number of farm broadcasters were in town with Farm Bureau groups and took time out to stop by for a visit. We understand there may have been others in town, but the ones we visited with included Joe Cornely (WRFD, Columbus, OH); Bruce Geiselman (WOBL, Oberlin, OH); Johnny Martin (Ohio Farm Bureau radio, Columbus) (yes, the same Johnny Martin of the one-liner fame); Bill Liermann (WKFI, Wilmington, OH); Dick Pernsteiner (WSAU, Wausau, WI); and Don Wick (KLGR, Redwood Falls, MN). Don contacted us about a month ago for help in arranging some interviews, and we were able to set up most of what he wanted. Which reminds me. If you're planning a trip to Washington, D.C. and would like help on setting up interviews, let us know. We can't guarantee we'll get everyone you want, but we'll try ... Chuck and Cindy Zimmerman (Independent Florida Agrinet, Ocala, FL) are the parents of a new baby girl. Her name is Carly Allison. She arrived at an interesting time. Chuck is still recovering from a broken knee he suffered in a car accident last November. Getting around, but slowly. Their other daughter Chelsea broke her collarbone two weeks before Carly arrived. And network partner Gary broken his arm a week later. If this keeps up, Carly will be on the air in no time. She'll have to be ... Jim Fleming is no longer at WTHI, Terre Haute, IN, and the station is looking for a replacement. The station's phone number is 812-232-9481 ... One nice thing about putting out a newsletter from your station or network...you have a lot (or all) to say about what goes into the letter. The latest we've received is Lew Middleton's (WQHK, Fort Wayne, IN). It contains four pictures of Lew. Lookin' good!


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 Radio and Television Division



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